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OPENING STATEMENT OF REP. CURT WELDON

CHAIRMAN, RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT SUBCOMMITTEE

HEARING ON NORTH KOREAN, IRANIAN,
AND WORLDWIDE MISSILE THREATS

May 7, 1997

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This morning, the Military Research and Development Subcommittee meets in open session to receive testimony on North Korean, Iranian, and worldwide missile threats. In particular, we will hear the results of a major study, just published by the Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis, that examines trends in the worldwide proliferation of ballistic missiles and weapons of mass destruction.

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The Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis study, **Exploring U.S. Missile Defense Requirements in 2010**, is the product literally of dozens of inputs from scholars, defense experts, and scientists, both within and outside the U.S. government. The final draft was also widely circulated among various think tanks for comments and criticism. So the final publication benefited from contributions and criticisms from diverse individuals and institutions representing a wide range of views.

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It has long been assumed that National Intelligence Estimates also represent a diverse range of views. It is generally assumed that opinions within the intelligence community are a representative cross-section of the larger body of scholarly and scientific opinion outside the intelligence community. Therefore, it is assumed that National Intelligence Estimates will not suffer from their creation in isolation, cut-off from the larger outside body of informed opinion and scholarship.

And so it is with alarm and genuine concern for the intellectual soundness and credibility of the intelligence community that I compare and contrast the findings of NIE 95-19, **Emerging Missile Threats to North America During the Next 15 Years**, with the recently published Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis study. Having read both of these studies, and despite the fact that NIE 95-19 draws on classified data, I find the Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis study to be more consistent with the facts, more closely reasoned, and more persuasive.

On point after point, the Institute for Foreign Policy analysis study, **Exploring U.S. Missile Defense Requirements in 2010**, compared to NIE 95-19, makes a compelling case for arriving at a virtually opposite set of conclusions. I should add that the key findings and methodologies of NIE 95-19 have been declassified and provided in open testimony before the National Security Committee, so nothing of a classified nature is being divulged in my remarks that follow.

On the issue of an unauthorized or accidental missile launch from Russia, NIE 95-19 judged that “the current threat to North America from unauthorized or accidental launch of Russian...strategic missiles remains remote and has not changed significantly from that of the past decade.” In contrast, **Exploring U.S. Missile Defense Requirements...** concludes, “Russia’s military is in disarray; the control that it exercises over its strategic missile forces is weakening. Thus, the possibility of an unauthorized launch is increasing and must be considered to be a distinct possibility.”

On the issue of the transfer of ICBMs to another country, NIE 95-19 reassured us that, “No country with ICBMs will sell them.” In contrast, **Exploring U.S. Missile Defense Requirements...** concludes, “The probability is increasing that ICBM missiles (either assembled as systems or as part of ‘knock-down kits’ for assembly) could be transferred to other states prior to 2010.” The study specifically mentions Russia’s SS-25 mobile ICBM as a particularly attractive candidate for foreign sale. Moreover, the study notes that Iran had contracted with North Korea to buy the medium-range No Dong missile. If North Korea is willing to sell the No Dong, why not the Taepo Dong-2 ICBM?

NIE 95-19 is bullish on the idea that arms control will be a robust barrier to ICBM proliferation, “The Missile Technology Control Regime...will continue to significantly limit international transfers of missiles, components, and related technology, but some leakage of components and critical technologies will likely continue.” In contrast, **Exploring U.S. Missile Defense Requirements...** finds that, “Export control regimes are expected to become increasingly ineffective as nonproliferation tools. The evolving international political and technological environment will continue to erode the utility of this approach to security.”

Finally, NIE 95-19 concluded, “No country, other than the major declared nuclear powers, will develop or otherwise acquire a ballistic missile in the next 15 years that could threaten the contiguous 48 states or Canada.” In contrast, the IFPA study concludes that “prior to 2010” India and North Korea “will almost certainly” acquire ICBMs that can reach the United States, and possibly Iran and Iraq, depending upon their received level of foreign assistance.

What disturbs me most about the contradictory views of NIE 95-19 and the IFPA study **Exploring U.S. Missile Defense Requirements in 2010**, is that, if one relied only on NIE 95-19 for an assessment of the future ICBM threat, you would not even know that the views contained in the IFPA study existed. Is it really possible that no one in the intelligence community thinks the way our witnesses do and the broad body of scientists and scholars that they represent? Alternative views dissenting from the fundamental conclusions of NIE 95-19 did not appear in the estimate, not even for purposes of rebuttal. If the intelligence community has become intellectually homogeneous, or if different credible views go unrepresented or are suppressed, then we as a nation are in real trouble.

With us today is a panel of independent experts from the Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis who will share with us the findings of their just completed study on trends in worldwide missile proliferation. We have with us today:

Dr. Robert Pfaltzgraff, Jr.
President
Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis

Mr. David Tanks
Senior Staff Member
Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis

We welcome you and thank you all for being here.